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TRUE COPY

Of the REMARKABLE

*Last Will and Testament*

O F

Mr. FRANCIS BANCROFT,

Citizen and Draper of LONDON.

In which are inserted the Uncommon Directions relating to his  
F U N E R A L.

With a Particular Account of his Donations  
to the *Drapers* Company, for the Erecting  
and Endowing Alms-Houses, &c.



L O N D O N :

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THE  
LAST WILL  
OF

Mr. *Francis Bancroft.*



FRANCIS BANCROFT,  
Citizen and Draper of  
*London*, considering  
the Uncertainty of hu-  
man Life, do make  
my Last Will and Te-  
stament in manner and form follow-  
ing:

B      *First,*

*First, I recommend my Soul to God my Creator, hoping through his Mercy, and the Merits of Jesus Christ my Blessed Saviour and Redeemer, to receive pardon for all my Sins, and Life Everlasting.*

*My Body I desire may be embalmed within six Days after my Death, and my Entrails to be put in a Leaden Box, and included in my Coffin, or placed in my Vault next the same, as shall be most convenient; and that my Coffin be made of Oak, lined with Lead, and that the Top or Lid thereof be hung with strong Hinges, neither to be nailed, screwed, locked down, nor fastened any other way, but to open freely, and without trouble, like to the Top of a Trunk.*

*And I desire to be buried in a Vault which I have made and purchased for that purpose under my Tomb in the Parish-Church of St. Hellens, London, within ten Days after my Decease, between the Hours of Nine and Ten a-clock at Night.*

And I do direct, that the whole Ex-  
pences of my Funeral, over and a-  
bove what I have hereafter given for  
Mourning and Rings, shall not ex-  
ceed the Sum of Two Hundred  
Pounds, which I leave to the Care  
and Management of my Executors  
herein after named. And as to such  
Worldly Estate as God in his Mercy  
has been pleased to bestow upon me,  
subject to, and charged with the Pay-  
ment of my Debts, Funeral Charges  
and Legacies hereby given, I give,  
devise, settle and dispose thereof as  
follows :

*Imprimis*, I give my Silver Bason  
to the said Church of *St. Hellens*,  
there to be used at the Communion-  
Service, or otherwise in the Service  
of that Church, and for no other Use  
or Purpose whatsoever.

*Item*, I give to my Cousin *Wil-  
liam Turner* Junior, a Ring of twen-  
ty Shillings Value, and my Diamond  
Table Ring, and ten Pounds for  
Mourning ; and I give to my Cous-  
in *Martha Turner*, a Ring of twen-  
ty Shillings Value, and my Rose-

Diamond Ring. I give to my Cousin *Nathaniel Cole* the Sum of one hundred Pounds. I give to my Cousin *Thomas Catmore*, Son of Captain *Thomas Catmore*, the Sum of five hundred Pounds, in case he shall attain his Age of twenty-one Years, and serve out the Term of his Apprenticeship, and not otherwise. Likewise I give him my large Trunk marked *T. B.* full of Linnen, and the Bedding and Furniture of my Chamber, and all my Pieces of Tapestry, together with my Books and Pictures; but not to have them removed till a Month after my Death, and then to be delivered to him. I give to my Cousins *John* and *Anne Wallis*, a Ring of twenty Shillings Value to each of them; and to their Children, *John*, *Robert*, *Thomas*, *Rebecca*, and *Martha*, five Pounds *per Annum* each during their natural Lives respectively, to be paid half-yearly by even Portions. I give to Mr. *Francis Howard*, Toyman, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*, and his Wife, ten Pounds a-piece for Mourning, and five Pounds *per Annum* to the said *Francis*, during his

his Life, to be paid half yearly by equal Portions. I give to *Sarah Marsh*, in *Coleman-street*, and her Daughter *Sarah Shaw*, seven Pounds Ten Shillings each for Mourning; and Ten Pounds *per Annum* each, during Life, to be paid half yearly by equal Portions: And to the said *Sarah Shaw*, my Silk-Damask Night-Gown. I give to Mr. *Robert Dobson*, Woodmonger; and to Mr. *Henry Hadley*, Distiller, Ten Pounds each for Mourning; and to my Cousin *Eads* and his Wife; *Thomas Effington* and his Wife; *Thomas Norton* and his Wife; *Robert Dobson*, Corn-Factor, and his Wife; Mr. *Henry Bedell*, Scrivener; *Mary Bales*, *William Phillips* Distiller, and *Phillis Deane*; and to each and every of them, a Ring of Twenty Shillings Value. I give to my Tenants, *James Stokes* and Wife; *William Mollofe*, and his Wife; *Edward Earling* and his Wife; and to each and every of them, a Ring of Ten Shillings Value. I give to Mr. *Mark Bates*, in St. Paul's-Church-yard, Toyman, the Sum of Forty Pounds. I give to Mr. *John Turner* of Drapers-Hall,

*Hall, London, Twenty Pounds.* I release and forgive unto *Nathaniel Frank*, the Ten Pounds due to me, by Note under his Hand, and all Interest in respect thereof, and do order the same Note to be delivered up by my Executors. I give to *William Burges*, Wire-Drawer, all my wearing Apparel, both Linnen and Woollen, except what is in the Trunk aforesaid, together with my Hats, Wigs and Shoes.

*Item*, I give and devise to the Master and Wardens, and Brethren and Sisters of the Guild or Fraternity of the Blessed *Mary* the Virgin of the Mystery of *Drapers, London*, and to their Successors and Assigns for ever, all my Messuages, Lands, Tenements and Hereditaments, as well Freehold and Leasehold as Copy-hold, situate and being in the several Parishes of *Woodham Ferris, Clements Green, Dunmore and Prittlewell*, in the County of *Essex*; and in the several Parishes of *Chiswick, St. Giles's in the Fields, and St. Margaret's Westminster*, in the County of *Middlesex*;

*Middlesex*; and in the Parishes of *Raydon*,  
*Layham*, and *Hadley*, or elsewhere  
in the County of *Suffolk*; and in the  
Parish of St. *Gregory*, in *London*;  
and all other Messuages, Lands, Te-  
nements and Hereditaments what-  
soever and wheresoever, whether  
Freehold, Leasehold, or Copyhold,  
whereof and wherein I am seized or  
possessed, or any other Person or Per-  
sons in Trust for me, or to my Use:  
such of the Premisses as are Copyhold,  
having been by me already sur-  
rendered to the Use of my Will.

And also all my Goods, Chattels,  
Ready Money, Plate, Bills, Bonds,  
Mortgages, *South-Sea Stock*, Annu-  
ity Stock, Orphans Stock, *East-India*  
Bonds, *South-Sea Bonds*; and all  
other my personal Estate whatso-  
ever, not herein otherwise disposed  
of; subject unto, and charged with  
the Payment of my Debts, Legacies,  
and Funeral Expences. All the said  
Estate, Real and Personal, amount-  
ing together, as I compute the  
same, to the Value of Twenty-eight  
Thousand Pounds, more or less: To  
have and to hold all and singular  
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the Premisses before mentioned, unto the said Master and Wardens, and Brethren and Sisters of the said Guild or Fraternity aforesaid, their Successors and Assigns for ever, so subject nevertheless, and charged as aforesaid, upon the several Trusts, and to and for the several Intents and Purposes herein after mentioned and expressed ; and to and for no other Use, Intent or Purpose whatsoever : That is to say, upon Trust, That the said Master and Wardens, and Brethren and Sisters of the said Guild or Fraternity, and their Successors, do and shall out of my personal Estate, lay out and expend the Sum of Four or Five Thousand Pounds or thereabouts, more or less, as in their discretion they shall see most fitting, in the Purchasing of a convenient Piece of Ground of Inheritance, within the *Weekly Bills* of Mortality of London, where they shall judge most adviseable ; and for the Building thereon Alms-Houses for Twenty Four Old Men, with a convenient Chappel, and School-Room for one Hundred poor Boys ; and two Dwelling

ling-Houses for two Masters ; and such other Out-building, Walling, and Accommodations, as shall be adjudged necessary and commodious for the Purposes aforesaid.

And my Desire is, that the said Twenty-four Old Men, shall be Members of the *Drapers Company*, of good Life and Conversation ; and shall from Time to Time, be chosen and admitted by the Master and Wardens of the said Company, for the Time being, or the major Part of them, in Case so many deserving and real poor Objects of that Company, can be found ; and for want thereof, then such other poor Old Men to be taken from any Place, as the said Master and Wardens shall best approve of.

And I do direct the said two Masters shall from Time to Time, be chosen and approved by the Court of Assistants of the said Company ; and that before they shall be admitted, they do give Bond, with two sufficient Sureties, in the Penalty of

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One Hundred Pounds or more, to be obedient and conformable to the Orders of the said Company; and quietly to leave and depart from the said School and Habitation upon three Months Notice, in Case of dislike or misbehaviour, upon Order made for that Purpose, by the said Court of Assistants; and that a new Master be afterward by them chosen in his stead.

And I do further direct and appoint, that the said one hundred Boys shall be chosen and placed into the said School by the Order and Authority of the said Master and Wardens, subject nevertheless to such Orders and Rules as the said Court of Assistants, or Committee thereof, shall from time to time make for the good Regulations and Government of the said School; and for Breach thereof, or other reasonable Cause, that such Boys shall be displaced and expelled by the same Authority, and other Boys chosen in their stead; and that no Children shall be capable of being chosen under the Age of seven Years, nor above

bove ten Years at their Election, nor be continued in the said School after the Age of fifteen Years.

And I do recommend to the said Company those excellent Rules prescribed for the Government of Charity-Schools in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, in a Book printed by *John Downing* for *Jonathan Bowyer* in *Ludgate-street*, in the Year one thousand seven hundred and ten, if the Company shall approve the same.

And my Will and Mind is, that the said Number of one hundred Boys shall be constantly kept up, in case so many poor Children shall be produced and tended for the Choice and Approbation of the said Company at their Wardens Court, and that they shall be taught to read, write and cast Account, and well instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, according to the Doctrine of the Church of *England* as by Law established; and I do appoint the said Masters shall read

Prayers in the Chapel every Morning and Evening alternately, and that the said Old Men, unless hindered by Sicknes, or other reasonable Cause, together with the Boys, shall constantly attend the said Service.

And upon further Trust, and my Will and Mind further is, That the said twenty-four Old Men, by and out of the Rents and Produce of my said Trust-Estate hereby devised, shall have eight Pounds *per Annum* a-piece duely paid them towards their Support and Maintenance, by four even Quarterly Payments, and six Sacks, or half a Chaldron of Coals each Yearly, and a Bayes Gown e-  
very third Year.

And that the said two Masters shall have thirty Pounds a-piece Salary, to be paid Quarterly as afore-said; and that twenty Pounds a Year be allowed to buy Coals and Candles for the Use of the said School and Masters, as the said Court of Assistants shall direct and appoint,  
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together with a sufficient Allowance for Books, Pens, Paper, or other Necessaries for the said School ; and that the said Boys shall be cloathed yearly with Blue Coats, Caps, Stockings, Shoes, and Linnen, like to other Charity - Children ; which I leave to the Discretion and Direction of the said Court of Assistants, or Care of the said Master and Wardens for the time being. And I do desire the said Master and Wardens, and such others of the said Court of Assistants as are usually appointed for their Visitations, will be pleased once a Year or oftner, if occasion requiring, to visit the said School and Alms-houses, to cause the said Children to be publickly examined and catechised, and to inquire into the State, Condition and Behaviour of the said poor Men, as well as to take view and give orders for the needful Repairs of the said School and Alms-houses ; and that a Sum not exceeding five Pounds be expended in a Dinner on that Day for the said Committee, and the two Masters invited to partake thereof.

Also

Also I desire and appoint two Sermons be preached on a *Sunday* in the Forenoon yearly for ever, in Commemoration of these my Charities; the one in *April* in the Parish-Church of *St. Hellens* aforesaid, by the Minister of that Parish; and the other in *October*, in the Parish-Church of *St. Michael's Cornhill*, or elsewhere, as the said Master and Wardens for the time being shall direct and appoint: And that the said Masters and Children, and Old Men, be then and there present, and the Children publickly examined and catechised; and that publick Notice thereof be given in the respective Churches the preceding *Sundays* immediately after Morning and Evening Prayer: And the Ministers shall have twenty Shillings each for preaching the said Sermons; and the Readers ten Shillings each for examining and catechising the said Children; and the Clerks and Sextons two Shillings and Six-pence each respectively.

And

And my Will and Mind further is, That when any of the said Children shall be fifteen Years old, they shall leave the said School, and be paid two Pounds ten Shillings to buy them Clothes to fit them for Service, or four Pounds to place them Apprentice to honest handicraft Trades, as the said Master and Wardens shall think most proper ; and that the said Master and Wardens, and Court of Assistants, shall have full Power from time to time to displace and put out the said Masters or Children, or Old Men, or any or either of them, and place in others in their stead, at their Wills and Pleasure, in case they shall conceive sufficient Cause for their so doing.

And whereas I have been at considerable Expence in purchasing a Piece of Ground, making a Vault, and erecting a Tomb in the Church of *St. Hellens* aforesaid ; I do hereby give and appoint the Sum of two Pounds *per Annum* for ever, and more,

more, whensoever needful, for the cleansing, taking care of, preserving and repairing my said Vault and Tomb as aforesaid ; it being my Intention and express Desire to have the same kept up in good Order and Repair for ever, whether the Church be standing or not : and to that end, I hereby subject and charge all my said Estate in *London* and *Middlesex* with the Payment and Support thereof before any of the Charities herein before mentioned.

*Item*, I give to the said Fraternity of Drapers the Sum of thirty-five Pounds to buy six or more Silver Plates, to be by them used and kept in Remembrance of me ; and to the Master and Wardens, and Clerk, that shall be in such Office or Station at the time of my Decease, to each of them a Ring of twenty Shillings in Value, whom I desire to be present at my Funeral, and hold up my Pall ; and to the Clerk of the Company for the time being, for his Care and Trouble in receiving my Rents, keeping my Accounts, and looking after my

my Charities, I give him the Sum of twenty Pounds *per Annum*; and to his Man for the time thirty Shillings *per Annum*.

*Item*, I do direct and appoint, That the said Fraternity shall out of the Rents and Produce of my said Trust-Estate, pay and allow to my Executors all such Costs, and Charges, and Expences, as they shall be put unto on account of their Executorship; and likewise shall thereout be allowed, and retain to themselves all such Sum and Sums of Money, Costs, Charges, and Disbursements, as they shall at any time hereafter be put unto, or reasonably expend in and about the proving of my Will, *in perpetuam rei memoriam*, in the Court of Chancery, or otherwise; and for all Repairs, Views, Journeys, Charges in Law or Equity, Visitations or other Expences and Out-goings whatsoever on account of this my Trust: Hereby willing and desiring them, after my said School and the Alms-houses are built and finished as aforesaid, to dispose of the Residue of

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my personal Estate in the Purchasing of Lands or Estate of Inheritance in Fee-simple, to be settled and assured as Counsel shall advise, unto and upon the said Company, and their Successors for ever, to answer the several Charitable Ends and Purposes aforesaid. And in the mean time, until such Purchase or Purchases may be had, to place out or continue the same at Interest ; or in any the publick Funds or Stocks, or otherwise, for the Improvement thereof, as in their discretion they shall see fit, or to Assign and Transfer the same, as occasion may require. But my Will is, that neither they nor any of them shall be answerable in any wise, for any Loss that shall or may happen by reason of any Purchase or Defect, in any Security to be by them made or taken in pursuance hereof.

And in case at any time hereafter, there shall appear any considerable Over-plus of any Estate beyond what is herein before by me given and provided for ; I then leave it to  
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the Master and Wardens, and Assistants of the said Company, for the time being, to apply and dispose of the same, for improving of this my Charity, as they shall think fit.

And in case my said Estate shall prove deficient to answer the Purposes aforesaid, Then I likewise leave it to the said Company to make a proportionable Reduction of this my Charity, in such Method and Manner, as to them shall appear most reasonable; it being my express Desire and Meaning, that neither the said Company, nor their Estate, shall in any wise be lessened, prejudiced, or impaired by reason of their acceptance of this Trust.

And I do hereby direct and appoint my Executors to Assign, Make over and Transfer all and singular my several Stocks herein before mentioned; and all other Stocks whatsoever, which I have or am intituled unto, in any of the publick Companies or otherwise, unto the said Master and Wardens, and Brethren

and Sisters of the Fraternity aforesaid ; and shall likewise Assign and Deliver over unto them, all Mortgages and other Securities whatsoever ; and all other my personal Estate, before mentioned, to be by me given and devised unto them, to the end that the same may be applied by them to the several Trusts, and for the several Charitable Purposes herein before directed and appointed.

And Lastly, I do nominate and appoint my worthy Friends, *Samuel Webb*, and *John Gould* of *Hackney*, Esquires ; *Nicholas Cripps*, of the County of *Kent*, Gent. *Thomas Barnard* of *London*, Gent. and *James Jackson* of *Woodford in Essex*, Gent. being all of them Citizens and Drapers of *London*, aforesaid, Executors of this my last Will and Testament : And I give unto each of them Twenty Pounds a-piece for their Care and Trouble in the Execution thereof.

And

And I do hereby revoke and make void all former or other Wills by me at any time heretofore made ; and do declare this present Writing, contained on six Sheets of Paper, to be my true and only Will. In Witness whereof, I the said *Francis Bancroft*, the Testator to all and every of the said six Sheets my Hand and Seal have subscribed and set, this eighteenth Day of *March* in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty Seven, and in the First Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King *GEORGE* the Second.

*F. BANCROFT.*

*Signed*

Signed, Sealed, Published and  
 Declared by the said Francis  
 Bancroft, the Testator, to be his  
 last Will and Testament, in  
 the Presence of us, who Sub-  
 scribed our Names as Wit-  
 nesses thereunto, in the Pre-  
 sence of him the said Testator,  
 this 18th Day of March, 1727.

George Waite, Lecturer of St. Mary  
 Islington.

John Bateman of Islington.

William Unwin, Clerk to Mr. Turner  
 of Drapers-Hall.

F I N I S.



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